

California State Prison Solano Facilities Inspection and Tour 2003-2004 Grand Jury Report

I. Reason for Investigation

The California Penal Code §919(b) mandates that the Grand Jury inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the County.

II. Procedure

The Grand Jury:

- Interviewed the Warden and staff
- Toured and inspected the facility
- Observed on-site health care facilities
- Reviewed vocational and education programs
- Reviewed and observed in the Substance Abuse Program (SAP), a prerelease program for recovering addicts

III. Background

1. The mission statement of the California State Prison (CSP) Solano is “ To incarcerate and control felons, while providing the opportunity for meaningful work, training and other programs”.

2. CSP Solano in Vacaville was designed to house 2,610 inmates and reconfigured to house 5,762 inmates through double bunking and other methods. At the time of the inspection, the facility housed 5,831 inmates. The facility was clean, well organized and orderly.

3. The prison provides a comprehensive work training program for medium security inmates, which includes academic training, vocational training and work assignments within the prison.

4. The Prison Industry Authority program offers meaningful work and occupational training for inmates who qualify. This program offers numerous manufacturing and services enterprises within the prison such as the manufacture of special vehicle equipment for Caltrans, disabled person placards for the Department of Motor Vehicles and prescription eyeglasses for Medi-Cal recipients and inmates. The program is totally self sufficient and no tax funds are used for direct costs. A portion of inmates’ wages is transferred to the Crime Victims Restitution Fund.

5. Inmate programs offered include adult basic education (high school/G.E.D.), English as a second language, literacy programs and substance abuse programs.

6. The Grand Jury observed the Substance Abuse Program (SAP) as provided by an outside contractor. This program is designed to provide comprehensive support services to recovering addicts and others involved in the drug culture through education, training and counseling. There are currently 400 inmates enrolled in the program. The program is provided to inmates who are within 24 months of release. When combined with a 90 day after-release care program, the recidivism rate for those in the program reduced 40% compared to those not in the program.

IV. Findings and Recommendations

Each finding is referenced to the background paragraph number.

Finding #1 – The facility is overcrowded. (1)

Recommendation #1 – The overcrowding should be addressed by the affected agencies.

Finding #2- Training programs offer opportunities for inmates to acquire helpful skills. (3)(4)(5)

Recommendation #2 – Continue programs and develop statistics to evaluate their effectiveness of the programs.

Finding #3 – The Substance Abuse Program, based on data provided by the contractor, reduced recidivism rate those inmates taking the program and participating in the after care program. (6)

Recommendation #3 – Continue the program if the stated recidivism rate reduction is maintained or improved.

V. Comments

The Warden and staff of the California State Prison Solano are to be commended for their leadership and management of the facility. The Substance Abuse Program is a challenging undertaking, and the Grand Jury commends it heartily. Data on recidivism rates was provided by the contractor administering the program. There was no additional documentation.

VI. Affected Agencies

- California State Prison Solano
- California Department of Corrections